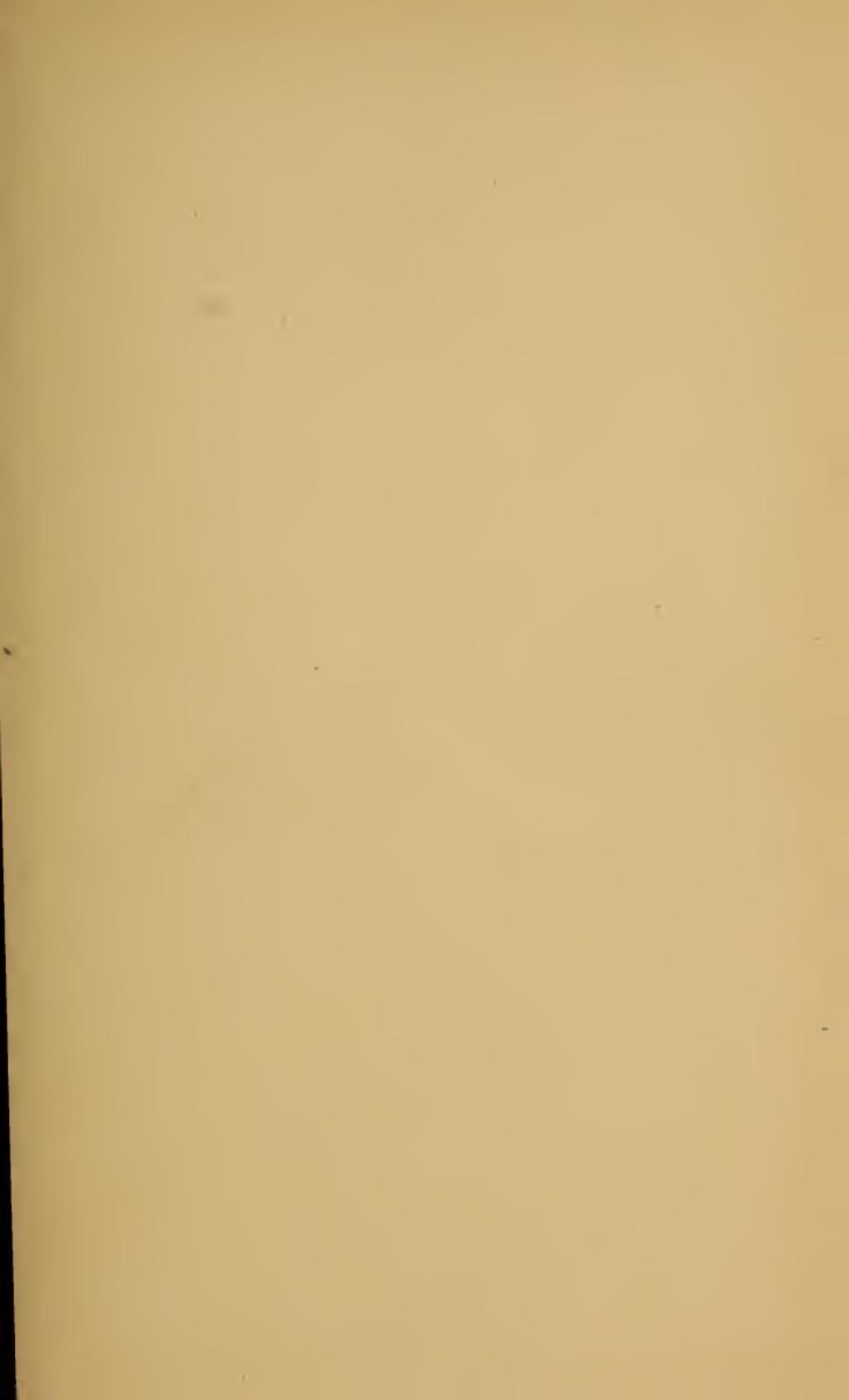


The  
**MARBLE**  
**PROPHECY**  
AND  
OTHER POEMS.  
BY  
*J. G. HOLLAND.*

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# THE MARBLE PROPHECY.

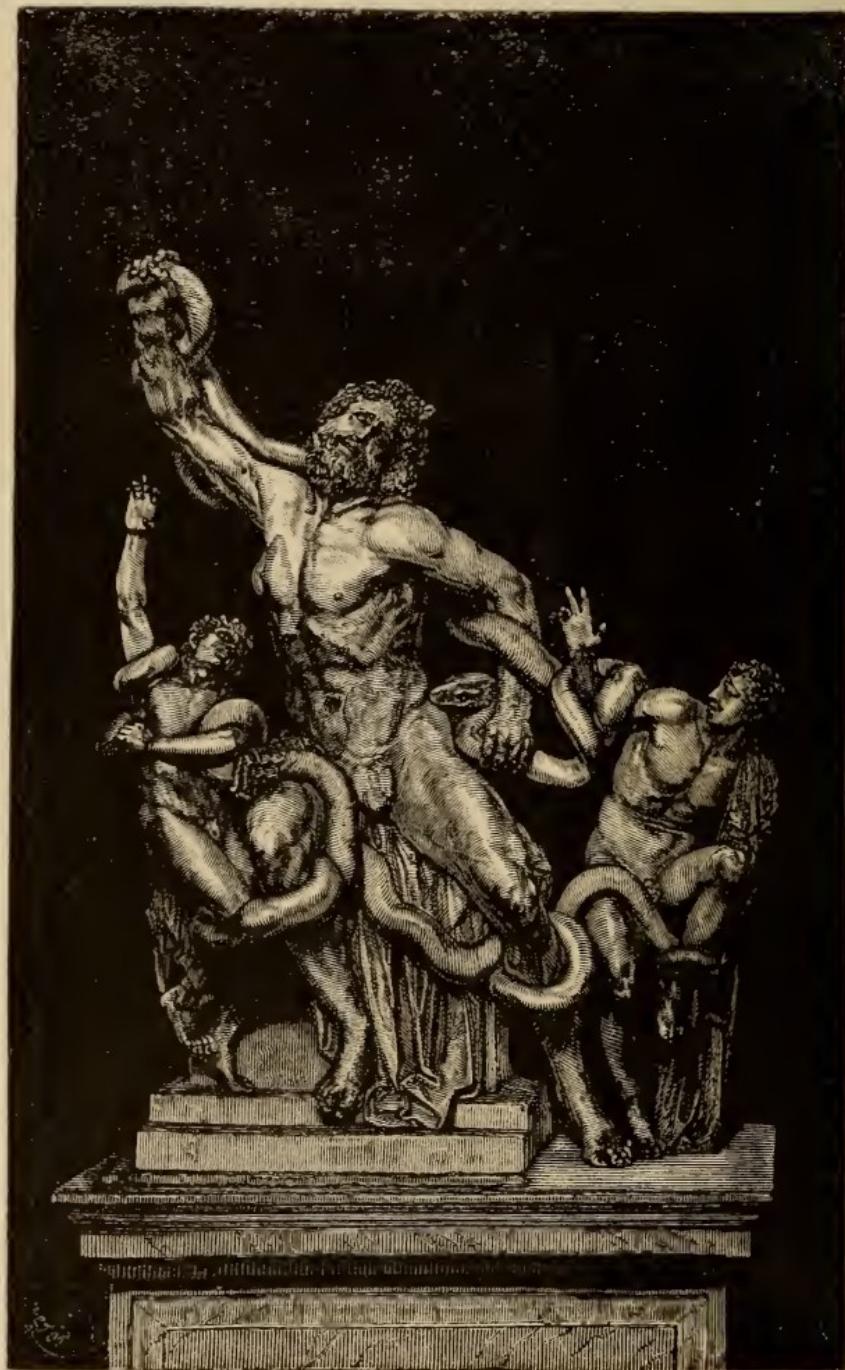
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# THE MARBLE PROPHECY,

AND OTHER POEMS.

✓ BY  
J. G. HOLLAND,

AUTHOR OF "BITTER SWEET," "KATHRINA," ETC., ETC.

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NEW YORK:

SCRIBNER, ARMSTRONG & CO.  
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## *THE MARBLE PROPHECY.*

The harlequins are out in force to-day—  
The piebald Swiss—and in the vestibule  
Of great St. Peter's rings the rhythmic tread  
Of Roman nobles, uniformed and armed  
As the Pope's Guard; and while their double  
line

With faultless curve enters the open door,  
And sways and sparkles up the splendid  
nave,

Between the walls of humbler soldiery,  
And parts to pass the altar—keeping step  
To the proud beating of their Roman  
hearts—

A breeze of whispered admiration sweeps  
The crowds that gaze, and dics within the  
dome.

St. Peter's toe (the stump of it) was cold  
An hour ago, but waxes warm apace  
With rub of handkerchiefs, and dainty touch  
Of lips and foreheads.

Smug behind their screen  
Sit the Pope's Choir. No woman enters  
there;

For woman is impure, and makes impure  
By voice and presence! Mary, mother of  
God!

Not thy own sex may sing thee in the  
courts

Of The All-Holy!—Only man, pure man!  
Doubt not the purity of some of these—  
Angels before their time—nor doubt  
That they will sing like angels, when  
Papa,

Borne on the shoulders of his stalwart men  
(The master rode an ass), and canopied  
By golden tapestries—the triple crown

Upon his brow, the nodding peacock plumes  
Far heralding his way—shall come to take  
His incense and his homage.

I will go.

'Tis a brave pageant, to be seen just  
once.

'Tis a brave pageant, but one does not  
like

To smutch his trousers kneeling to a man,  
Or bide the stare that follows if he fail;  
So, having seen it once, one needs not  
wait.

What is the feast? Let's see: ah! I re-  
call:

St. Peter's chair was brought from An-  
tioch

So many years ago;—the worse for wear  
No doubt, and never quite luxurious,

But valued as a piece of furniture  
By Rome above all price; and so they  
give

High honor to the anniversary.

'Tis well; in Rome they make account  
of chairs.

If less in heaven, it possibly may be  
Because they're greatly occupied by joy  
Over bad men made penitent and pure  
By this same chair! Who knows?

I'll to the door!

The sun seems kind and simple in the sky  
After such pomp. I thank thee, Sun!

Thou hast

A smile like God, that reaches to the  
heart

Direct and sweet, without the ministries  
Of scene and ceremonial! Thy rays  
Fall not in benediction at the ends

Of two pale fingers; but thy warmth and  
light

Wrap well the cold dark world. I need  
no prism

To teach my soul that thou art beautiful:  
It would divide thee, and confuse my sight.  
Shine freely, sun! No mighty mother  
church

Stands mediator between thee and me!

Ay, shine on these—all these in shivering  
need—

To whom God's precious love is doled or  
sold

By sacerdotal hucksters! Shine on these,  
And teach them that the God of Life  
and Light

Dwells not alone in temples made by  
hands;

And that the path to Him, from every  
soul,

In every farthest corner of the earth,  
Is as direct as are thy rays to thee!

Ha! Pardon! Have I hurt you? Welladay!

I was not looking for a beggar here:—  
Indeed, was looking upward! But I see  
You're here by royal license—with a badge  
Made of good brass. Come nearer to me!  
there:

Take double alms, and give me chance to  
read

The number on your breast. So: “Sev-  
enty-seven”!

’Tis a good number, man, and quite at  
home

About the temple. Well, you have hard  
fare,

But many brothers and no end of shows!  
Think it not ill that they will spend to-  
day,

Touching this chair, enough of time and  
gold

To gorge the poor of Rome. The men  
who hold

The church in charge—who are, indeed,  
the church—

Have little time to give to starving men.  
Be thankful for your label! Only one  
Can be the beggar “Number seventy-  
seven”!

They are distinguished persons: so are you!  
You must be patient, though it seems, I  
grant,

A trifle odd that when a miracle  
Is wrought before you, it will never take  
A useful turn, as in the olden time,  
And give you loaves and fishes, or in-  
crease

Your little dinners!

Still the expectant crowds  
Press up the street from round St. Angelo,  
And thread the circling colonnade, or cross  
With hurried steps the broad piazza—  
crowds

That pass the portal, and at once are lost  
Within the vaulted glooms, as morning mist  
Is quenched by morning air.

It is God's house—  
The noblest temple ever reared to Him  
By hands of men—the culminating deed  
Of a great church—the topmost reach of  
art  
For the enshrinement of the Christian faith  
In sign and symbol. Holiness becomes  
The temple of the Holy!

And these crowds?  
Come they to pour the worship of their  
hearts  
Like wine upon the altar? Who are they?  
Last night, we hear, the theatre was full.  
It was a spectacle: they went to see.

All yesterday they thronged the galleries,  
Or roved among the ruins, or drove out  
Upon the broad campagna—just to see.  
This afternoon, with gaudy equipage,  
(Their Bædeker and Murray left at home),  
They'll be upon the Pincio—to see.  
And so this morning, learning of the chair  
And the Pope's coming, they are here to see  
(The men in swallow-tails, their wives in  
black),  
The grandest spectacle of all the week.  
Make way ye men of poverty and dirt  
Who fringe the outer lines ! Make open-  
way  
And let them pass ! This is the House of  
God,  
And swallow-tails are of fine moment here !

The ceremony has begun within.  
I hear the far, faint voices of the choir,

As if a door in heaven were left ajar,  
And cherubim were singing . . . Now I hear  
The sharp, metallic chink of grounded arms  
Upon the marble, as His Holiness  
Moves up the lines of bristling bayonets  
That guard his progress. . . . But I stay  
alone.

Nay, I will to the Vatican, and there,  
In converse with the thoughts of manlier  
men,  
Pass the great morning! I shall be alone—  
Ay, all alone with thee, Laocoon!

“A feast day and no entrance”? Can  
one’s gold  
Unloose a soul from purgatorial bonds  
And ope the gates of heaven, without the  
power  
To draw a bolt at the Museum? Wait!

Laocoon ! thou great embodiment  
Of human life and human history !  
Thou record of the past, thou prophecy  
Of the sad future, thou majestic voice,  
Pealing along the ages from old time !  
Thou wail of agonized humanity !  
There lives no thought in marble like to  
thee !

Thou hast no kindred in the Vatican,  
But standest separate among the dreams  
Of old mythologies—alone—alone !  
The beautiful Apollo at thy side  
Is but a marble dream, and dreams are all  
The gods and goddesses and fauns and fates  
That populate these wondrous halls ; but  
thou,

Standing among them, liftest up thyself  
In majesty of meaning, till they sink  
Far from the sight, no more significant  
Than the poor toys of children. For thou  
art

A voice from out the world's experience,

Speaking of all the generations past  
To all the generations yet to come  
Of the long struggle, the sublime despair,  
The wild and weary agony of man !

Ay, Adam and his offspring, in the toils  
Of the twin serpents Sin and Suffering,  
Thou dost impersonate ; and as I gaze  
Upon the twining monsters that enfold  
In unrelaxing, unrelenting coils,  
Thy awful energies, and plant their fangs  
Deep in thy quivering flesh, while still thy  
might

In fierce convulsion foils the fateful wrench  
That would destroy thee, I am overwhelmed  
With a strange sympathy of kindred  
pain,

And see through gathering tears the tragedy,  
The curse and conflict of a ruined race !

Those Rhodian sculptors were gigantic men,  
Whose inspirations came from other source  
Than their religion, though they chose to  
speak

Through its familiar language,—men who  
saw,

And, seeing quite divinely, felt how weak  
To cure the world's great woe were all  
the powers

Whose reign their age acknowledged. So  
they sat—

The immortal three—and pondered long and  
well

What one great work should speak the  
truth for them,—

What one great work should rise and testify  
That they had found the topmost fact of  
life,

Above the reach of all philosophies  
And all religions—every scheme of man  
To placate or dethrone. That fact they  
found,

And moulded into form. The silly priest  
Whose desecrations of the altar stirred  
The vengeance of his God, and summoned  
forth

The wretched gorgons of the slimy deep  
To crush him and his children, was the word  
By which they spoke to their own age and  
race,

That listened and applauded, knowing not  
That high above the small significance  
They apprehended, rose the grand intent  
That mourned their doom and breathed a  
world's despair !

Be sure it was no fable that inspired  
So grand an utterance. Perchance some leaf  
From an old Hebrew record had conveyed  
A knowledge of the genesis of man.  
Perchance some fine conception rose in them  
Of unity of nature and of race,

Springing from one beginning. Nay, perchance

Some vision flashed before their thoughtful eyes

Inspired by God, which showed the mighty man,

Who, unbegotten, had begot a race

That to his lot was linked through countless time

By living chains, from which in vain it strove  
To wrest its tortured limbs and leap amain  
To freedom and to rest! It matters not:  
The double word—the fable and the fact,  
The childish figment and the mighty truth,  
Are blent in one. The first was for a day  
And dying Rome; the last for later time  
And all mankind.

These sculptors spoke their word  
And then they died; and Rome—imperial Rome—

The mistress of the world—debauched by  
blood

And foul with harlotries—fell prone at length  
Among the trophies of her crimes and slept.  
Down toppling one by one her helpless gods  
Fell to the earth, and hid their shattered  
forms

Within the dust that bore them, and among  
The ruined shrines and crumbling masonry  
Of their old temples. Still this wondrous  
group,

From its long home upon the Esquiline,  
Beheld the centuries of change, and stood,  
Impersonating in its conscious stone  
The unavailing struggle to crowd back  
The closing folds of doom. It paused to  
hear

A strange New Name proclaimed among  
the streets,

And catch the dying shrieks of martyred  
men,

And see the light of hope and heroism

Kindling in many eyes; and then it fell;  
And in the ashes of an empire swathed  
Its aching sense, and hid its tortured forms.

The old life went, the new life came; and  
Rome  
That slew the prophets built their sepul-  
chres,  
And filled her heathen temples with the  
shrines  
Of Christian saints whom she had tossed  
to beasts,  
Or crucified, or left to die in chains  
Within her dungeons. Ay, the old life  
went  
But came again. The primitive, true age—  
The simple, earnest age—when Jesus Christ  
The Crucified was only known and preached,  
Struck hands with paganism and passed  
away.

Rome built new temples and installed new names;

Set up her graven images, and gave  
To Pope and priests the keeping of her gods.  
Again she grasped at power no longer hers  
By right of Roman prowess, and stretched  
out

Her hand upon the consciences of men.  
The godlike liberty with which the Christ  
Had made his people free she stole from them,  
And bound them slaves to new observances.  
Her times, her days, her ceremonials  
Imposed a burden grievous to be borne,  
And millions groaned beneath it. Nay, she  
grew

The vengeful persecutor of the free  
Who would not bear her yoke, and bathed  
her hands

In blood as sweet as ever burst from hearts  
Torn from the bosoms of the early saints  
Within her Coliseum. She assumed  
To be the arbiter of destiny.

Those whom she bound or loosed upon the earth,  
Were bound or loosed in heaven! In God's own place,  
She sat as God—supreme, infallible!  
She shut the door of knowledge to mankind,  
And bound the Word Divine. She sucked the juice  
Of all prosperities within her realms,  
Until her gaudy temples blazed with gold,  
And from a thousand altars flashed the fire  
Of priceless gems. To win her countless wealth  
She sold as merchandise the gift of God.  
She took the burden which the cross had borne,  
And bound it fast to scourged and writhing loins  
In thriftless Penance, till her devotees  
Fled from their kind to find the boon of peace,

And died in banishment. Beneath her sway,  
The proud old Roman blood grew thin and  
mean

Till virtue was the name it gave to fear,  
Till heroism and brigandage were one,  
And neither slaves nor beggars knew their  
shame!

What marvel that a shadow fell, world-wide,  
And brooded o'er the ages? Was it strange  
That in those dim and drowsy centuries,  
When the dumb earth had ceased to quake  
beneath

The sounding wheels of progress, and the  
life

That erst had flamed so high had sunk so  
low

In cold monastic glooms and forms as cold,  
The buried gods should listen in their sleep  
And dream of resurrection? Was it strange

That listening well they should at length  
awake,

And struggle from their pillows? Was it  
strange

That men whose vision grovelled should  
perceive

The dust in motion, and with rapture greet  
Each ancient deity with loud acclaim,  
As if he brought with him the good old  
days

Of manly art and poetry and power?

Nay, was it strange that as they raised them-  
selves,

And cleaned their drowsy eyelids of the dust,  
And took their godlike attitudes again,  
The grand old forms should feel themselves  
at home—

Saving perhaps a painful sense that men  
Had dwindled somewhat? Was it strange,  
at last,

That all these gods should be installed anew,  
And share the palace with His Holiness,

And that the Pope and Christian Rome can  
show

No art that equals that which had its birth  
In pagan inspiration? Ah, what shame!  
That after two millenniums of Christ,  
Rome calls to her the thirsty tribes of earth,  
And smites the heathen marble with her rod,  
And bids them drink the best she has to  
give!

And when the gods were on their feet again  
It was thy time to rise, Laocöon!  
Those Rhodian sculptors had foreseen it all.  
Their word was true: thou hadst the right  
to live.

In the quick sunlight on the Esquiline,  
Where thou didst sleep, De Fredis kept his  
vines;

And long above thee grew the grapes whose  
blood

Ran wild in Christian arteries, and fed  
The fire of Christian revels. Ah what fruit  
Sucked up the marrow of thy marble there !  
What fierce, mad dreams were those that  
scared the souls

Of men who drank, nor guessed what ichor  
stung

Their crimson lips, and tingled in their veins !  
Strange growths were those that sprang  
above thy sleep :

Vines that were serpents; huge and ugly  
trunks

That took the forms of human agony—  
Contorted, gnarled and grim—and leaves  
that bore

The semblance of a thousand tortured hands,  
And snaky tendrils that entwined them-  
selves

Around all forms of life within their reach,  
And crushed or blighted them !

At last the spade  
Slid down to find the secret of the vines,  
And touched thee with a thrill that startled  
Rome,  
And swiftly called a shouting multitude  
To witness thy unveiling.

Ah what joy  
Greeted the rising from thy long repose !  
And one, the mighty master of his time,  
The king of Christian art, with strong,  
sad face  
Looked on, and wondered with the giddy  
crowd,—  
Looked on and learned (too late, alas ! for  
him),  
That his humanity and God's own truth  
Were more than Christian Rome, and spoke  
in words  
Of larger import. Humbled Angelo  
Bowed to the masters of the early days,

Grasped their strong hands across the  
centuries,  
And went his way despairing !

Thou, meantime,  
Dids't find thyself installed among the gods  
Here in the Vatican; and thou, to-day,  
Hast the same word for those who read thee  
well

As when thou wast created. Rome has  
failed:

Humanity is writhing in the toils  
Of the old monsters as it writhed of old,  
And there is neither help nor hope in her.  
Her priests, her shrines, her rites, her  
mummeries,

Her pictures and her pageants, are as weak  
To break the hold of Sin and Suffering  
As those her reign displaced. Her iron  
hand

Shrivels the manhood it presumes to bless,  
Drives to disgust or infidelity

The strong and free who dare to think and  
judge,

And wins a kiss from coward lips alone.

She does not preach the Gospel to the poor,  
But takes it from their hands. The men  
who tread

The footsteps of the Master, and bow down  
Alone to Him, she brands as heretics  
Or hunts as fiends. She drives beyond her  
gates

The Christian worshippers of other climes,  
And other folds and faiths, as if their brows  
Were white with leprosy, and grants them  
there

With haughty scorn the privilege to kneel  
In humble worship of the common Lord !

Is this the Christ, or look we still for Him ?  
Is the old problem solved, or lingers yet

The grand solution? Ay Laocōon!  
Thy word is true, for Christian Rome has  
failed,  
And I behold humanity in thee  
As those who shaped thee saw it, when  
old Rome  
In that far pagan evening fell asleep.

## *THE WINGS.*

A feeble wail was heard at night,  
And a stifled cry of joy;  
And when the morn broke cool and light,  
They bore to the mother's tearful sight  
A fair and lovely boy.

Months passed away;  
And day by day  
The mother hung about her child  
As in his little cot he lay,  
And watched him as he smiled,  
And threw his hands into the air,  
And turned above his large, bright eyes,  
With an expression half of prayer  
And half of strange surprise;  
For hovering o'er his downy head

A dainty vision hung.  
Fluttering, swaying,  
Unsteadily it swung,  
As if suspended by a thread,  
His own sweet breath obeying.

Sometimes with look of wild beseeching  
He marked it as it dropped  
Almost within his awkward reaching,  
And as the vision stopped  
Beyond his anxious grasp,  
And cheated the quick clasp  
Of dimpled hands, and quite  
Smothered his chirrup of delight,  
And he saw his effort vain  
And the bright vision there again  
Dancing before his sight,  
His eyes grew dim with tears,  
Till o'er the flooded spheres  
The soothing eye-lids crept,  
And the tired infant slept.

He saw—his mother could not see—  
A presence and a mystery:

Two waving wings,  
Spangled with silver, starlike things:  
No form of light was borne between;  
Only the wings were seen!

Years steal away with silent feet,  
And he, the little one,  
With brow more fair and voice more sweet  
Is playing in the sun.  
Flowers are around him and the songs  
Of bounding streams and happy birds,  
But sweeter than their sweetest tongues  
Break forth his own glad words.  
And as he sings  
The wings, the wings!  
Before him still they fly!  
And nothing that the summer brings  
Can so entice his eye.  
Hovering here, hovering there,  
Hovering everywhere,

They flash and shine among the flowers,  
While dripping sheen in golden showers  
Falls through the air where'er they hover  
Upon the radiant things they cover.

Hurrying here, hurrying there,  
Hurrying everywhere,  
He plucks the flowers they shine upon,  
But while he plucks their light is gone!  
And casting down the faded things,  
Onward he springs  
To follow the wings!

Years run away with silent feet;  
The boy, to manhood grown,  
Within a shadowy retreat  
Stands anxious and alone.  
His bosom heaves with heavy sighs,  
His hair hangs damp and long,  
But fiery purpose fills his eyes,  
And his limbs are large and strong:  
And there above a gentle hill,

The wings are hovering still,  
While their soft radiance, rich and warm,  
Falls on a maiden's form.

And see! again he starts,  
And onward darts,  
Then pauses with a fierce and sudden pain,  
Then presses on again,  
Till with mixed thoughts of rapture and  
despair,  
He kneels before her there:—  
With hands together prest,  
He prays to her with low and passionate calls,  
And, like a snow-flake pure, she flutters, falls,  
And melts upon his breast.

Long in that dearest trance he hung—  
Then raised his eyes; the wings that swung  
In glancing circles round his head

Afar had fled,  
And wheeled, with calm and graceful flight,  
Over a scene  
That glowed with glories Beauteously bright  
Beneath their sheen.

High in the midst a monument arose,  
Of pale enduring marble; calm and still,  
It seemed a statue of sublime repose,  
The silent speaker of a mighty will.

Its sides were hung around  
With boughs of evergreen; and its long  
shaft was crowned  
With a bright laurel-wreath,  
And glittering beneath  
Were piled great heaps of gold upon the  
ground.

Children were playing near—fair boys and  
girls,

Who shook their sunny curls,  
And laughed and sang in mirthfulness of  
spirit,  
And in their childish pleasures  
Danced around the treasures  
Of gold and honor they were to in-  
herit.

The sight has fired his brain;  
Onward he springs again.  
O'er ruined blocks  
Of wild and perilous rocks,  
Through long damp caves, o'er pitfalls  
dire,  
And maddening scenes of blood and fire,  
Fainting with heat,  
Benumbed with cold,  
With weary, aching feet,  
He sternly toils, and presses on to  
greet  
The monument, the laurels and the gold.

Years have passed by; a shattered form  
Leans faintly on a monument;  
His glazing eyes are bent  
In sadness down: a tear falls to the ground  
That through the furrows of his cheek hath  
wound.  
The children beautiful have ceased to play,  
Tarnished the marble stands with dark  
decay,  
The laurels all are dead, and flown the gold  
away

Once more he raised his eyes; before  
him lay  
A dim and lonely vale,  
And feebly tottering in the downward  
way  
Walked spectres cold and pale.  
And darkling groves of shadowy cypress  
sprung

Among the damp clouds that around them  
hung.

One vision only cheers his aching sight ;

Those wings of light

Have lost their varied hues, and changed to  
white,

And, with a gentle motion, slowly wave  
Over a new made grave.

He casts one faltering, farewell look behind,  
Around, above, one mournful glance he  
throws,

Then with a cheerful smile, and trusting  
mind,

Moves feebly toward the valley of repose.  
He stands above the grave; dull shudders  
creep

Along his limbs, cold drops are on his brow;  
One sigh he heaves, and sinking into sleep  
He drops and disappears ;—and dropping  
now,

The wings have followed too.

But, lo ! new visions burst upon the view !

They reappear in glory bright and new !  
And to their sweet embrace a soul is given,  
And on the wings of HOPE an angel flies  
to HEAVEN.

## *INTIMATIONS.*

WHAT glory then! What darkness now!  
A glimpse, a thrill, and it is flown!  
I reach, I grasp, but stand alone,  
With empty arms and upward brow!

Ye may not see, O weary eyes!  
The band of angels, swift and bright,  
That pass, but cannot wake your sight,  
Down trooping from the crowded skies.

O heavy ears! Ye may not hear  
The strains that pass my conscious soul,  
And seek, but find no earthly goal,  
Far falling from another sphere.

Ah! soul of mine! Ah! soul of mine!  
Thy sluggish senses are but bars  
That stand between thee and the stars,  
And shut thee from the world divine.

For something sweeter far than sound,  
And something finer than the light  
Comes through the discord and the night  
And penetrates, or wraps thee round.

Nay, God is here, couldst thou but see;  
All things of beauty are of Him;  
And heaven, that holds the cherubim,  
As lovingly embraces thee!

If thou hast apprehended well  
The tender glory of a flower,  
Which moved thee, by some subtle power  
Whose source and sway thou couldst not tell;

If thou hast kindled to the sweep  
Of stormy clouds across the sky,  
Or gazed with tranced and tearful eye,  
And swelling breast, upon the deep;

If thou hast felt the throb and thrill  
Of early day and happy birds,  
While peace, that drowned thy chosen  
words  
Has flowed from thee in glad good-will,

Then hast thou drunk the heavenly dew;  
Then have thy feet in rapture trod  
The pathway of a thought of God;  
And death can show thee nothing new.

For heaven and beauty are the same,—  
Of God the all-informing thought,  
To sweet, supreme expression wrought,  
And syllabled by sound and flame.

The light that beams from childhood's eyes,  
The charm that dwells in summer woods,  
The holy influence that broods  
O'er all things under twilight skies,—

The music of the simple notes  
That rise from happy human homes,  
The joy in life of all that roams  
Upon the earth, and all that floats,

Proclaim that heaven's sweet providence  
Enwraps the homely earth in whole,  
And finds the secret of the soul  
Through channels subtler than the sense.

O soul of mine! Throw wide thy door,  
And cleanse thy paths from doubt and sin;  
And the bright flood shall enter in  
And give thee heaven forevermore!

## *WORDS.*

The robin repeats his two musical words,  
The meadow-lark whistles his one refrain;  
And steadily, over and over again,  
The same song swells from a hundred birds.

Bobolink, chickadee, blackbird and jay,  
Thrasher and woodpecker, cuckoo and  
wren,  
Each sings its word, or its phrase, and then  
It has nothing further to sing or to say.

Into that word, or that sweet little phrase,  
All there may be of its life must crowd;  
And lulling and liquid, or hoarse and loud,  
It breathes out its burden of joy and praise.

A little child sits in his father's door,  
Chatting and singing with careless tongue ;  
A thousand beautiful words are sung,  
And he holds unuttered a thousand more.

Words measure power ; and they measure  
thine ;  
Greater art thou in thy prattling moods  
Than all the singers of all the woods ;  
They are brutes only, but thou art divine.

Words measure destiny. Power to declare  
Infinite ranges of passion and thought  
Holds with the infinite only its lot,—  
Is of eternity only the heir.

Words measure life, and they measure its joy !  
Thou hast more joy in thy childish years  
Than the birds of a hundred tuneful  
spheres,  
So—sing with the beautiful birds, my boy !

## *SLEEPING AND DREAMING.*

I softly sink into the bath of sleep:  
With eyelids shut, I see around me close  
The mottled, violet vapors of the deep,  
That wraps me in repose.

I float all night in the ethereal sea  
That drowns my pain and weariness in  
balm,  
Careless of where its currents carry me,  
Or settle into calm.

That which the ear can hear is silent all;  
But, in the lower stillness which I reach,  
Soft whispers call me, like the distant fall  
Of waves upon the beach.

Now like the mother who with patient care  
Has soothed to rest her faint, o'erwearied  
boy,

My spirit leaves the couch, and seeks the air  
For freedom and for joy.

Drunk up like vapors by the morning sun  
The past and future rise and disappear;  
And times and spaces gather home, and run  
Into a common sphere.

My youth is round me, and the silent tomb  
Has burst to set its fairest prisoner free,  
And I await her in the dewy gloom  
Of the old trysting tree.

I mark the flutter of her snowy dress,  
I hear the tripping of her fairy feet,  
And now, pressed closely in a pure caress,  
With ardent joy we meet.

I tell again the story of my love,  
I drink again her lip's delicious wine,  
And, while the same old stars look down  
above,  
Her eyes look up to mine.

I dream that I am dreaming, and I  
start;  
Then dream that nought so real comes  
in dreams;  
Then kiss again to reassure my heart  
That she is what she seems.

Our steps tend homeward. Lingering at  
the gate,  
I breathe, and breathe again, my fond  
good night.  
She shuts the cruel door, and still I  
wait  
To watch her window-light.

I see the shadow of her dainty head,  
On curtains that I pray her hand may  
stir,  
Till all is dark; and then I seek my  
bed  
To dream I dream of her.

Like the swift moon that slides from cloud  
to cloud,  
With only hurried space to smile between,  
I pierce the phantoms that around me  
crowd,  
And glide from scene to scene.

I clasp warm hands that long have lain in  
dust,  
I hear sweet voices that have long been  
still,  
And earth and sea give up their hallowed  
trust  
In answer to my will.

And now, high-gazing toward the starry dome,

I see three airy forms come floating down—

The long-lost angels of my early home—  
My night of joy to crown.

They pause above, beyond my eager reach,

With arms enwreathed and forms of heavenly grace;

And smiling back the love that smiles from each,

I see them, face to face.

They breathe no language, but their holy eyes

Beam an embodied blessing on my heart,

That warm within my trustful bosom lies,

And never will depart.

I drink the effluence, till through all my soul  
I feel a flood of peaceful rapture flow,  
That swells to joy at last, and bursts control,  
And I awake; but lo!

With eyelids shut, I hold the vision fast,  
And still detain it by my ardent prayer,  
Till faint and fainter grown, it fades at last  
Into the silent air.

My God! I thank Thee for the bath of sleep,  
That wraps in balm my weary heart and  
brain,  
And drowns within its waters still and deep  
My sorrow and my pain.

I thank Thee for my dreams, which loose  
the bond  
That binds my spirit to its daily load,  
And give it angel wings, to fly beyond  
Its slumber-bound abode.

I thank Thee for these glimpses of the clime  
That lies beyond the boundaries of sense,  
Where I shall wash away the stains of time  
In floods of recompense:—

Where, when this body sleeps to wake no  
more,  
My soul shall rise to everlasting dreams,  
And find unreal all it saw before  
And real all that seems.

*ON THE RIGHI.*

On the Righi Kulm we stood,  
Lovely Floribel and I,  
While the morning's crimson flood  
Streamed along the eastern sky.  
Reddened every mountain peak  
Into rose, from twilight dun;  
But the blush upon her cheek  
Was not lighted by the sun!

On the Righi Kulm we sat,  
Lovely Floribel and I,  
Plucking blue-bells for her hat  
From a mound that blossomed nigh.  
“We are near to heaven,” she sighed,  
While her raven lashes fell.  
“Nearer,” softly I replied,  
“Than the mountain’s height may tell.”

Down the Righi's side we sped,  
    Lovely Floribel and I,  
But her morning blush had fled,  
    And the blue-bells all were dry.  
Of the height the dream was born ;  
    Of the lower air it died ;  
And the passion of the morn  
Flagged and fell at eventide.

From the breast of blue Lucerne,  
    Lovely Floribel and I  
Saw the brand of sunset burn  
    On the Righi Kulm, and die.  
And we wondered, gazing thus,  
    If our dream would still remain  
On the height, and wait for us  
Till we climb to heaven again !

### *GRADATIM.*

HEAVEN is not reached at a single bound,  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to its summit round by  
round.

I count this thing to be grandly true:  
That a noble deed is a step toward God,—  
Lifting the soul from the common clod  
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under feet;  
By what we have mastered of good and  
gain;  
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,  
And the vanquished ills that we hourly  
meet.

We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust,  
When the morning calls us to life and  
light,  
But our hearts grow weary, and, ere the  
night,  
Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,  
And we think that we mount the air on  
wings  
Beyond the recall of sensual things,  
While our feet still cling to the heavy  
clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men !  
We may borrow the wings to find the  
way—  
We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and  
pray ;  
But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown  
From the weary earth to the sapphire  
walls ;  
But the dreams depart, and the vision  
falls,  
And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound ;  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to its summit, round by  
round.

## *RETURNING CLOUDS.*

THE clouds are returning after the rain.

All the long morning they steadily sweep  
From the blue Northwest, o'er the upper  
main,

In a peaceful flight to their Eastern sleep.

With sails that the cool wind fills or furls,  
And shadows that darken the billowy  
grass,

Freighted with amber or piled with pearls,  
Fleets of fair argosies rise and pass.

The earth smiles back to the smiling throng  
From greening pasture and blooming field,

For the earth that had sickened with thirst  
so long  
Has been touched by the hand of The  
Rain, and healed.

The old man sits 'neath the tall elm trees,  
And watches the pageant with dreamy  
eyes,  
While his white locks stir to the same cool  
breeze  
That scatters the silver along the skies.

The old man's eyelids are wet with tears—  
Tears of sweet pleasure and sweeter  
pain—  
For his thoughts are driving back over the  
years  
In beautiful clouds after life's long rain.

Sorrows that drowned all the springs of his  
life,  
Trials that crushed him with pitiless  
beat,  
Storms of temptation and tempests of  
strife,  
Float o'er his memory tranquil and sweet.

And the old man's spirit, made soft and  
bright  
By the long, long rain that had bent him  
low,  
Sees a vision of angels on wings of white,  
In the trooping clouds as they come and  
go.

## *EUREKA.*

WHOM I crown with love is royal;  
Matters not her blood or birth;  
She is queen; and I am loyal  
To the noblest of the earth.

Neither place, nor wealth, nor title,  
Lacks the man my friendship owns;  
His distinction, true and vital,  
Shines supreme o'er crowns and thrones.

Where true love bestows its sweetness,  
Where true friendship lays its hand,  
Dwells all greatness, all completeness,  
All the wealth of every land.

Man is greater than condition,  
And where man himself bestows,  
He begets, and gives position  
To the gentlest that he knows.

Neither miracle nor fable  
Is the water changed to wine;  
Lords and ladies at my table  
Prove Love's simplest fare divine.

And if these accept my duty,  
If the loved my homage own,  
I have won all worth and beauty;  
I have found the magic stone.

*WHERE SHALL THE BABY'S  
DIMPLE BE?*

OVER the cradle the mother hung,  
Softly crooning a slumber-song;  
And these were the simple words she sung  
All the evening long:

“Cheek or chin, or knuckle or knee,  
Where shall the baby's dimple be?  
Where shall the angel's finger rest  
When he comes down to the baby's nest?  
Where shall the angel's touch remain  
When he awakens my babe again?”

Still as she bent and sang so low,  
A murmur into her music broke;  
And she paused to hear, for she could but  
know  
The baby's angel spoke.

“Cheek or chin, or knuckle or knee,  
Where shall the baby’s dimple be?  
Where shall my finger fall and rest  
When I come down to the baby’s nest?  
Where shall my finger’s touch remain  
When I awaken your babe again?”

Silent the mother sat, and dwelt  
Long in the sweet delay of choice;  
And then by her baby’s side she knelt,  
And sang with pleasant voice:

“Not on the limb, O angel dear!  
For the charm with its youth will disappear;  
Not on the cheek shall the dimple be,  
For the harboring smile will fade and flee;  
But touch thou the chin with an impress  
deep,  
And my baby the angel’s seal shall keep.”

## *THE HEART OF THE WAR.*

(1864.)

PEACE in the clover-scented air,  
And stars within the dome ;  
And underneath, in dim repose,  
A plain, New England home.  
Within, a murmur of low tones  
And sighs from hearts oppressed,  
Merging in prayer, at last, that brings  
The balm of silent rest.

---

I've closed a hard day's work, Marty,—  
The evening chores are done ;  
And you are weary with the house,  
And with the little one.  
But he is sleeping sweetly now,  
With all our pretty brood ;  
So come and sit upon my knee,  
And it will do me good.

Oh, Marty! I must tell you all  
The trouble ~~in~~ my heart,  
And you must do the best you can  
To take and bear your part.  
You've seen the shadow on my face;  
You've felt it day and night;  
For it has filled our little home,  
And banished all its light.

I did not mean it should be so,  
And yet I might have known  
That hearts which live as close as ours  
Can never keep their own.  
But we are fallen on evil times,  
And, do whate'er I may,  
My heart grows sad about the war,  
And sadder every day.

I think about it when I work,  
And when I try to rest,

And never more than when your head  
Is pillow'd on my breast;  
For then I see the camp-fires blaze,  
And sleeping men around,  
Who turn their faces toward their homes,  
And dream upon the ground.

I think about the dear, brave boys,  
My mates in other years,  
Who pine for home and those they love,  
Till I am choked with tears.  
With shouts and cheers they marched away  
On glory's shining track,  
But, Ah! how long, how long they stay!  
How few of them come back!

One sleeps beside the Tennessee,  
And one beside the James,  
And one fought on a gallant ship  
And perished in its flames.

And some, struck down by fell disease,  
Are breathing out their life;  
And others, maimed by cruel wounds,  
Have left the deadly strife.

Ah, Marty! Marty, only think  
Of all the boys have done  
And suffered in this weary war!  
Brave heroes, every one!  
Oh! often, often in the night,  
I hear their voices call:  
*“Come on and help us. Is it right  
That we should bear it all?”*

And when I kneel and try to pray,  
My thoughts are never free,  
But cling to those who toil and fight  
And die for you and me.  
And when I pray for victory,  
It seems almost a sin  
To fold my hands and ask for what  
I will not help to win.

Oh! do not cling to me and cry,  
For it will break my heart;  
I'm sure you'd rather have me die  
Than not to bear my part.  
You think that some should stay at home  
To care for those away;  
But still I'm helpless to decide  
If I should go or stay.

For, Marty, all the soldiers love,  
And all are loved again;  
And I am loved, and love, perhaps,  
No more than other men.  
I cannot tell—I do not know—  
Which way my duty lies,  
Or where the Lord would have me build  
My fire of sacrifice.

I feel—I know—I am not mean;  
And, though I seem to boast,  
I'm sure that I would give my life  
To those who need it most.

Perhaps the Spirit will reveal  
That which is fair and right;  
So, Marty, let us humbly kneel  
And pray to Heaven for light.

---

Peace in the clover-scented air,  
And stars within the dome;  
And underneath, in dim repose,  
A plain, New England home.  
Within, a widow in her weeds,  
From whom all joy is flown,  
Who kneels among her sleeping babes,  
And weeps and prays alone!

### *TO A SLEEPING SINGER.*

LOVE in her heart, and song upon her lip—  
A daughter, friend, and wife—  
She lived a beauteous life,  
And love and song shall bless her in her  
sleep.

The flowers whose language she interpreted,  
The delicate airs, calm eves, and starry skies  
That touched so sweetly her chaste sym-  
pathies,  
And all the grieving souls she comforted,  
Will bathe in separate sorrows the dear  
mound,  
Where heart and harp lie silent and pro-  
found.

Oh, Woman ! all the songs thou left to us  
We will preserve for thee, in grateful love ;  
Give thou return of our affection thus,  
And keep for us the songs thou sing'st  
above !

## *SONG AND SILENCE.*

“ MY Mabel, you once had a bird  
In your throat; and it sang all the day!  
But now it sings never a word:  
Has the bird flown away?

“ Oh sing to me, Mabel, again !  
Strike the chords ! Let the old fountain  
flow  
With its balm for my fever and pain,  
As it did years ago ! ”

Mabel sighed (while a tear filled and fell),  
“ I have bade all my singing adieu ;  
But I’ve a true story to tell,  
And I’ll tell it to you.

“ There’s a bird’s nest up there in the oak,  
On the bough that hangs over the stream,  
And last night the mother-bird broke  
Into song in her dream.

“ This morning she woke, and was still ;  
For she thought of the frail little things  
That needed her motherly bill,  
Waiting under her wings.

“ And busily, all the day long,  
She hunted and carried their food,  
And forgot both herself and her song  
In her care for her brood.

“ I sang in my dream, and you heard ;  
I woke, and you wonder I’m still ;  
But a mother is always a bird  
With a fly in its bill ! ”

## *ALONE!*

ALL alone in the world! all alone!  
With a child on my knee, or a wife on  
my breast,  
Or, sitting beside me, the beautiful guest  
Whom my heart leaps to greet as its sweet-  
est and best,  
Still alone in the world! all alone!

With my visions of beauty, alone!  
Too fair to be painted, too fleet to be  
scanned,  
Too regal to stay at my feeble command,  
They pass from the grasp of my impotent  
hand:  
Still alone in the world! all alone!

Alone with my conscience, alone !  
Not an eye that can see when its finger  
of flame  
Points my soul to its sin, or consumes it  
with shame !  
Not an ear that can hear its low whisper  
of blame !  
Still alone in the world ! all alone !

In my visions of self, all alone !  
The weakness, the meanness, the guilt that  
I see,  
The fool or the fiend I am tempted to be,  
Can only be seen and repented by me :  
Still alone in the world ! all alone !

Alone in my worship, alone !  
No hand in the universe, joining with mine,  
Can lift what it lays on the altar divine,  
Or bear what it offers aloft to its shrine :  
Still alone in the world ! all alone !

In the valley of death, all alone !  
The sighs and the tears of my friends are  
in vain,  
For mine is the passage, and mine is the  
pain,  
And mine the sad sinking of bosom and  
brain :  
Still alone in the world ! all alone !

Not alone ! never, never alone !  
There is one who is with me by day and  
by night,  
Who sees and inspires all my visions of  
light,  
And teaches my conscience its office aright :  
Not alone in the world ! not alone !

Not alone ! never, never alone !  
He sees all my weakness with pitying eyes,  
He helps me to lift my faint heart to the  
skies,  
And in my last passion he suffers and dies :  
Not alone ! never, never alone !

## *ALBERT DURER'S STUDIO.*

IN the house of Albert Durer  
Still is seen the studio  
Where the pretty Nurembergers  
(Cheeks of rose and necks of snow)  
Sat to have their portraits painted,  
Thrice a hundred years ago.

Still is seen the little loop-hole  
Where Frau Durer's jealous care  
Watched the artist at his labor,  
And the sitter in her chair,  
To observe each word and motion  
That should pass between the pair.

Handsome, hapless Albert Durer  
Was as circumspect and true

As the most correct of husbands,  
When the dear delightful shrew  
Has him, and his sweet companions,  
Every moment under view.

But I trow that Albert Durer  
Had within his heart a spot  
Where he sat, and painted pictures  
That gave beauty to his lot,  
And the sharp, intrusive vision  
Of Frau Durer entered not.

Ah ! if brains and hearts had loop-holes,  
And Frau Durer could have seen  
All the pictures that his fancy  
Hung upon their walls within,  
How minute had been her watching,  
And how good he would have been !

*THE OLD CLOCK OF PRAGUE.*

THERE'S a curious clock in the city of  
Prague—

A remarkable old astronomical clock—  
With a dial whose outline is that of an  
egg,  
And with figures and fingers a wonder-  
ful stock.

It announces the dawn and the death of  
the day,

Shows the phases of moons and the  
changes of tides,

Counts the months and the years as they  
vanish away,

And performs quite a number of mar-  
vels besides.

At the left of the dial a skeleton stands;  
And aloft hangs a musical bell in the  
tower,  
Which he rings, by a rope that he holds  
in his hands,  
In his punctual function of striking the  
hour.

And the skeleton nods, as he tugs at the  
rope,  
At an odd little figure that eyes him  
aghast,  
As a hint that the bell rings the knell of  
his hope,  
And the hour that is solemnly tolled is  
his last.

And the effigy turns its queer features away  
(Much as if for a snickering fit or a sneeze),  
With a shrug and a shudder, that strug-  
gle to say:

“ Pray excuse me, but—just an hour more,  
if you please ! ”

But the funniest sight, of the numerous  
sights

Which the clock has to show to the peo-  
ple below,

Is the Holy Apostles in tunics and tights,  
Who revolve in a ring, or proceed in a  
row.

Their appearance can hardly be counted  
sublime ;

And their movements are formal, it must  
be allowed ;

But they're prompt, for they always appear  
upon time,

And polite, for they bow very low to the  
crowd.

This machine (so reliable papers record)  
Was the work, from his own very clever  
design  
Of one Hanusch, who died in the year  
of our Lord  
One thousand four hundred and ninety  
and nine.

Did the people receive it with honor? you  
ask;  
Did it bring a reward to the builder?  
Ah, well!  
It was proper that they should have paid  
for the task!  
And they did, in a way that it shocks  
me to tell.

For suspecting that Hanusch might grow  
to be vain,  
Or that cities around them might covet  
their prize,

They invented a story that he was insane,  
And, to stop him from labor, extin-  
guished his eyes!

But the cunning old artist, though dying  
in shame,

May be sure that he labored and lived  
not amiss;

For his clock has outlasted the foes of his  
fame,

And the world owes him much for a  
lesson like this:

That a private success is a public offence,  
That a citizen's fame is a city's disgrace,  
And that both should be shunned by a  
person of sense,

Who would live with a whole pair of  
eyes in his face.

## *A CHRISTMAS CAROL.*

THERE'S a song in the air!  
There's a star in the sky !  
There's a mother's deep prayer  
And a baby's low cry !  
And the star rains its fire while the Beau-  
tiful sing,  
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a  
king.

There's a tumult of joy  
O'er the wonderful birth,  
For the virgin's sweet boy  
Is the Lord of the earth,  
Ay ! the star rains its fire and the Beau-  
tiful sing,  
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a  
king !

In the light of that star  
Lie the ages impearled ;  
And that song from afar  
Has swept over the world.

Every hearth is aflame, and the Beautiful  
sing

In the homes of the nations that Jesus  
is King.

We rejoice in the light,  
And we echo the song  
That comes down through the night  
From the heavenly throng.

Ay! we shout to the lovely evangel they  
bring,

And we greet in his cradle our Saviour  
and King!

. VERSES READ AT THE HADLEY  
CENTENNIAL.

(JUNE 9, 1859.)

HEART of Hadley, slowly beating  
Under midnight's azure breast,  
Silence thy strong pulse repeating  
Wakes me—shakes me—from my rest.\*

Hark! a beggar at the basement!  
Listen! friends are at the door!  
There's a lover at the casement!  
There are feet upon the floor!

But they knock with muffled hammers,  
They step softly like the rain,  
And repeat their gentle clamors  
Till I sleep and dream again.

\* The pulsations of Hadley Falls, on the Connecticut, are felt for many miles around, in favorable conditions of the atmosphere.

Still the knocking at the basement;

Still the rapping at the door;

Tireless lover at the casement;

Ceaseless feet upon the floor.

Bolts are loosed by spectral fingers,

Windows open through the gloom,

And the lilacs and syringas

Breathe their perfume through the room.

'Mid the odorous pulsations

Of the air around my bed,

Throng the ghostly generations

Of the long forgotten dead.

“Rise and write!” with gentle pleading

They command and I obey;

And I give to you the reading

Of their tender words to-day.

“ Children of the old plantation,  
Heirs of all we won and held,  
Greet us in your celebration—  
Us—the nameless ones of Eld !

“ We were never squires or teachers,  
We were neither wise nor great,  
But we listened to our preachers,  
Worshipped God and loved the State.

“ Blood of ours is on the meadow,  
Dust of ours is in the soil,  
But no marble casts a shadow  
Where we slumber from our toil.

“ Unremembered, unrecorded,  
We are sleeping side by side,  
And to names is now awarded  
That for which the nameless died.

"We were men of humble station;  
We were women pure and true;  
And we served our generation,—  
Lived and worked and fought for you.

"We were maidens, we were lovers,  
We were husbands, we were wives;  
But oblivion's mantle covers  
All the sweetness of our lives."

"Praise the men who ruled and led us;  
Carry garlands to their graves;  
But remember that your meadows  
Were not planted by their slaves.

"Children of the old plantation,  
Heirs of all we won and held,  
Greet us in your celebration,—  
Us, the nameless ones of Eld."

This their message, and I send it,  
Faithful to their sweet behest,  
And my toast shall e'en attend it,  
To be read among the rest.

Fill to all the brave and blameless  
Who, forgotten, passed away!  
Drink the memory of the nameless,—  
Only named in heaven to-day!

## *WANTED.*

GOD give us men ! A time like this demands

Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands ;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill ;

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy ;

Men who possess opinions and a will ;

Men who have honor,—men who will not lie ;

Men who can stand before a demagogue,

And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking !

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog

In public duty, and in private thinking :

For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,

Their large professions and their little  
deeds,—

Mingle in selfish strife, lo ! Freedom weeps,  
Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice  
sleeps !

### *MERLE THE COUNSELLOR.*

OLD MERLE, the counsellor and guide,  
And tall young Rolfe walked side by side  
At the sweet hour of eventide.

The yellow light of parting day  
Upon the peaceful landscape lay,  
And touched the mountain far away.

The tinkling of the distant herds,  
And the low twitter of the birds  
Mingled with childhood's happy words.

The old man raised his trembling palm,  
And bared his brow to meet the balm  
That fell with twilight's dewy calm;

And one could see that to his thought,  
The scenes and sounds around him brought  
Suggestions of the heaven he sought.

But Rolfe, his young companion, bent  
His moody brow in discontent,  
And sadly murmured as he went.

For vagrant passions, fierce and grim,  
And fearful memories haunted him,  
That made the evening glory dim.

Then spoke the cheerful voice of Merle:  
“Where yonder clouds their gold unfurl,  
One almost sees the gates of pearl.

“Nay, one can hardly look amiss  
For heaven, in such a scene as this,  
Or fail to feel its present bliss.

“ So near we stand to holy things,  
And all our high imaginings,  
That faith forgets to lift her wings ! ”

Then answered Rolfe, with bitter tone :  
“ If thou hast visions of the throne,  
Enjoy them ; they are all thy own .

“ For me there lives no God of love ;  
For me there bends no heaven above ;  
And Peace, the gently brooding dove ,

“ Has flown afar, and in her stead  
Fierce vultures wheel above my head ,  
And hope is sick and faith is dead .

“ Death can but loose a loathsome bond ,  
And from the depths of my despond ,  
I see no ray of light beyond . ”

It was a sad, discordant strain,  
That brought old Merle to earth again,  
And filled his soul with solemn pain.

At length they reached a leafy wood,  
And walked in silence, till they stood  
Within the fragrant solitude.

Then spake old Merle with gentle art:  
“I know the secret of thy heart,  
And will, if thou desire, impart.”

Rolfe answered with a hopeless sigh,  
But from the tear that brimmed his eye,  
The old man gladly caught reply,

And spoke: “Beyond these forest trees  
A city stands; and sparkling seas  
Waft up to it the evening breeze.

“Thou canst not see its gilded domes,  
Its plume of smoke, its pleasant homes,  
Or catch the gleam of surf that foams

“And dies upon its verdant shore,  
But there it stands; and there the roar  
Of life shall swell for evermore!

“The path we walk is fair and wide,  
But still our vision is denied  
The city and its nursing tide.

“The path we walk is wide and fair,  
But curves and wanders here and there,  
And builds the wall of our despair.

“Make straight the path, and then shall  
shine  
Through trembling walls of tree and vine  
The vision fair for which we pine.

"And thou, my son, so long hast been  
Along the crooked ways of sin,  
That they have closed, and shut thee in.

"Make straight the path before thy feet,  
And walk within it firm and fleet,  
And thou shalt see, in vision sweet

"And constant as the love supreme,  
With closer gaze and brighter beam,  
The peaceful heaven that fills my dream."

He paused: no more his lips could say;  
And then, beneath the twilight gray,  
The silent pair retraced their way.

But in the young man's eyes a light  
Shone strong and resolute and bright,  
For which Merle thanked his God that night.

*DANIEL GRAY.*

IF I shall ever win the home in heaven  
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope and pray,  
In the great company of the forgiven  
I shall be sure to find old Daniel Gray.

I knew him well; in truth, few knew him  
better;  
For my young eyes oft read for him the  
Word,  
And saw how meekly from the crystal letter  
He drank the life of his beloved Lord.

Old Daniel Gray was not a man who listed  
On ready words his freight of gratitude,  
Nor was he called among the gifted,  
In the prayer-meetings of his neighborhood.

He had a few old-fashioned words and  
phrases,  
Linked in with sacred texts and Sunday  
rhymes;  
And I suppose that in his prayers and graces,  
I've heard them all at least a thousand times.

I see him now—his form, his face, his mo-  
tions,  
His homespun habit, and his silver hair,—  
And hear the language of his trite devotions,  
Rising behind the straight-backed kitchen  
chair.

I can remember how the sentence sounded—  
“ Help us, O Lord, to pray and not to  
faint ! ”  
And how the “conquering-and-to conquer”  
rounded  
The loftier aspirations of the saint.

He had some notions that did not improve  
him,

He never kissed his children—so they  
say;

And finest scenes and fairest flowers would  
move him

Less than a horse-shoe picked up in the  
way.

He had a hearty hatred of oppression,  
And righteous words for sin of every kind;  
Alas, that the transgressor and transgres-  
sion

Were linked so closely in his honest mind!

He could see nought but vanity in beauty,  
And naught but weakness in a fond caress,  
And pitied men whose views of Christian  
duty

Allowed indulgence in such foolishness.

Yet there were love and tenderness within  
him ;  
And I am told that when his Charley  
died,  
Nor nature's need nor gentle words could  
win him  
From his fond vigils at the sleeper's side.

And when they came to bury little Charlie,  
They found fresh dew-drops sprinkled in his  
hair,  
And on his breast a rose-bud gathered  
early,  
And guessed, but did not know who placed  
it there.

Honest and faithful, constant in his calling,  
Strictly attendant on the means of grace,  
Instant in prayer, and fearful most of fall-  
ing,  
Old Daniel Gray was always in his place.

A practical old man, and yet a dreamer,  
He thought that in some strange, unlooked-  
for way  
His mighty Friend in Heaven, the great  
Redeemer,  
Would honor him with wealth some golden  
day.

This dream he carried in a hopeful spirit  
Until in death his patient eye grew dim,  
And his Redeemer called him to inherit  
The heaven of wealth long garnered up for  
him.

So, if I ever win the home in heaven  
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope and  
pray,  
In the great company of the forgiven  
I shall be sure to find old Daniel Gray.

## *THE MOUNTAIN CHRISTENING.*

*(A Legend of The Connecticut.)*

How did they manage to busy themselves—  
Our sires, in the early plantation days?  
Grinding their axes and whittling their  
helves?  
Fishing for salmon and planting maize?

How when the chopping and splitting were  
done?  
How when the corn-fields were planted and  
hoed?  
How when the salmon had ceased to run,  
And the bushes were cleared from the old  
Bay Road?

They were not men who stood still in their  
shoes,

Or who clung to their cabins when forests  
were damp;

So, when labor was finished, they cut the  
blues

And their sticks for a lively exploring  
tramp.

'Twas a beautiful morning in June, they  
say—

Two hundred and twenty years ago,  
When armed and equipped for a holiday,  
They stood where Connecticut's waters  
flow,

With five upon this side and five upon  
that,—

Agawam's bravest and hardiest men,  
Hailing each other with lusty chat,  
That the tall woods caught and tossed  
over again.

Holyoke, the gentle and daring, stood  
On the Eastern bank with his trusty four,  
And Rowland Thomas, the gallant and good,  
Headed the band on the other shore.

“Due North!” shouted Holyoke and all  
his men.

“Due North!” answered they on the  
opposite beach;  
And northward they started, the sturdy ten,  
With their haversacks filled and a musket  
each.

The women ran panting to bid them good-  
bye

And sweet Mary Pynchon was there (I  
guess),  
With a sigh in her throat and a tear in  
her eye  
As Holyoke marched into the wilderness,

And the boys were all wondering where  
they would go,

And what they would meet in the dan-  
gerous way ;

And the good wives were gossiping to and  
fro,

And prating and shaking their heads all  
day

Up the bright river they travelled abreast,  
Calling each other from bank to bank,  
Till the hot sun slowly rolled into the West,  
And gilded the mountain-tops where it sank.

They lighted their camp-fires and ate of their  
fare,

And drank of the water that ran at their  
feet,

And wrapped in the balm of the cool evening  
. air,

Sank down to a sleep that was dreamless  
and sweet.

The great falls roared in their ears all night,  
And the sturgeon splashed and the wild-  
cat screamed,  
But they did not wake till the morning  
light  
Red through the willowy branches beamed.

Brief was the toilet and short the grace,  
And strong were the viands that broke  
their fast;  
Then onward they pressed till they reached  
the place  
Where the river between two mountains  
passed.

Up the rough ledges they clambered amain,  
Holyoke and Thomas on either hand,  
Till high in mid-passage they paused, and  
then  
They tearfully gazed on a lovely land.

Down by the Ox-Bow's southerly shore  
Licking the wave bowed an antlered buck ;  
And Northward and Westward a league or  
more  
Stretched the broad meadows of Nonotuck.

Straight up the river an Indian town  
Filled the soft air with its musical hum,  
And children's voices were wafted down  
From the peaceful shadows of Hockanum.

Rude little patches of greening maize  
Dappled the landscape far and wide,  
And away in the North in the sunset's blaze,  
Sugar-loaf stood and was glorified !

The morning dawned on the double group  
Facing each other on opposite shores,  
Where ages ago with a mighty swoop  
The waters parted the mountain doors.

"Let us christen the mountains," said Holyoke in glee;

"Let us christen the mountains," said Thomas again;

"That mountain for you, and this mountain for me!"

And their trusty fellows responded:  
"Amen!"

Then Holyoke buried his palm in the stream,

And tossed the pure spray toward the mountain's brow,

And said, while it shone in the sun's first beam,

"Fair mountain, thou art Mount Holyoke now!"

The sun shone full on the Western height,  
When Thomas came up from the crystal tide:

“I name thee Thomas by Christian rite!”

“Thou art Mount Thomas!” they all replied.

They paused but a moment when rounding  
a bluff

Shot an Indian’s boat with its stealthy oar,  
And with strings of wampum and gaudy stuff  
They beckoned it in to the Western shore.

Gracious and brief was the bargain made  
By the white man’s potent pantomime;  
And the delicate boat with its dainty blade  
Bore them over the river one man at a  
time.

There were greetings and jests in every  
mouth,  
And hearty farewells to “Holyoke” and  
“Tom”:

Then the gleeful men turned their steps due  
South,  
And took a bee-line for Agawam.

They passed Willimansett at noon that day,  
And Chicopee just as the sun went down,  
And when the last daylight had faded away,  
All hungry and weary they entered the  
town.

Mr. Pynchon demanded a full report,  
Which Holyoke wrote for the two com-  
mands;  
And when he went down to the General  
Court  
He placed it in Governor Winthrop's  
hands.

### *A GOLDEN WEDDING-SONG.*

THE links of fifty golden years  
Reach to the golden ring  
Which now, with glad and grateful tears,  
We celebrate and sing.  
O chain of love! O ring of gold!  
That have the years defied;  
And still in happy bondage hold  
The old man and his bride!

The locks are white that once were black;  
The sight is feebler grown;  
But through the long and weary track  
The heart has held its own!  
O chain of love! O ring of gold!  
That time could not divide;  
That kept through changes manifold  
The old man with his bride!

The little ones have come and gone;  
The old have passed away;  
But love—immortal love—lives on,  
And blossoms 'mid decay.  
O chain of love! O ring of gold!  
That have the years defied;  
And still with growing strength infold  
The old man and his bride!

The golden bridal! ah, how sweet  
The music of its bell,  
To those whose hearts the vows repeat  
Their lives have kept so well!  
O chain of love! O ring of gold!  
O marriage true and tried!  
That bind with tenderness untold  
The old man to his bride!

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